



Water Quality NewsFlash

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CSOs, SSOs – EPA report looks at impacts - “Separate” sewer systems have one set of pipes for sewage (sanitary sewer) and a different set of pipes handles storm water runoff. Sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) occur most frequently during wet weather due to leakage of stormwater (“infiltration and inflow”) into the sanitary sewer. This leakage fills the pipes resulting in overflows, typically from manholes. SSOs are also caused by blockages in the sewer system or pipeline breaks. Combined sewer systems collect both sewage and stormwater in the same pipes. These systems may also overflow during wet weather (CSOs). There are only two major CSO systems in California: San Francisco (nearly the entire city) and Sacramento (partial). Stormwater runoff into combined sewer systems is exempt from the stormwater permitting requirements. Both CSOs and SSOs can have significant impacts on waterways during wet weather, especially by raising bacteria levels.

U.S. EPA has prepared a report to Congress examining the impacts and status of SSOs and CSOs. The report includes a comparison of the volumes of treated wastewater (i.e., from sewage treatment plants), CSOs, SSOs, and urban stormwater. Treated wastewater accounts for 51% of all “municipal discharges,” followed closely by urban stormwater runoff at 45%, CSOs at 4% and SSOs at less than 1%. Current regulations require that combined sewer communities develop and implement plans to significantly reduce the occurrence of CSOs. Controversial regulations under development are intended to reduce SSOs. The report estimates a cost of \$51 billion for CSO control and \$89 billion for SSOs. http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/cso/cpolicy_report2004.cfm

Children's Pool – Proposal for humans and seals to share contaminated beach – Children’s Pool is a small La Jolla beach protected by a breakwater. Bacteria levels at the beach typically exceed standards and it has an ongoing health advisory status due to contamination by marine mammals. A proposal under consideration would give seals exclusive occupation rights for the first half of the year which is pupping season, while humans would have access to the beach from July 1 to January 1, but would still have to share it with any seals around. The proposal also includes sand removal and beach cleaning. Story: <http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/metro/20040914-9999-1m14seals.html>

Upcoming events

- *Conference* - Advanced Treatment BMPs for Storm Water Runoff from Construction Sites; Oct. 21; Sacramento; Topic: systems currently being utilized in CA & other states to treat turbid construction site runoff; see: <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/stormwtr/training.html#conference>
- *Science Conference* – CALFED Bay-Delta, 3rd Biennial; Oct. 4-6; Sacramento; Topics include: mercury and other pollutants, environmental justice, climate, and many others; go to: <http://iep.water.ca.gov/calfed/sciconf/2004/>
- *SFEP Training* – Construction site stormwater control; at various SF Bay Area locations; one-day; through Dec.; see: <http://www.abag.ca.gov/bayarea/sfep/programs/construction/index.html>

WQ NewsFlash is a weekly update of storm water and related news for the Department. *Verify information before taking action on these bulletins.* Contact Betty Sanchez, Betty_Sanchez@dot.ca.gov (916) 653-2115, or Fred Krieger, (510) 843-7889, fkrieger@msn.com with questions or to be added or deleted from e-mail list. Posted online at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/env/stormwater/publicat/newsflash/index.htm>